

# California GARDEN

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1999

Volume 90 No. 1

\$1.50



# HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR

## JAN. 4

### **PALOMAR DISTRICT DESIGN FORUM**

Floral Design Program by Brenda Parsons from England. RB Comm. Church. 17010 Pomerado Rd. Rancho Bernardo. 12:30-3PM. 760/749-1920.

## JAN. 9

**EAST COUNTY ROSE SOCIETY** Rose Pruning Demonstration. 11252 Horizon Hills Dr. El Cajon. Sat. 1-4PM. 588-8893.

## JAN. 16

**POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB** Rose Pruning Demonstration. Lake Poway. Sat. 10AM. **SAN DIEGO ROSE SOCIETY** Rose Care Seminar. 8:30AM-3:10PM. 279-6134. \$20. **MIRACOSTA HORTICULTURE CLUB** Succulent Wreath Workshop. One Barnard Dr., Oceanside Campus. 1PM. 760/945-1287.

## JAN. 16-17

**DESCANSO GARDENS** Camellia Show 1418 Descanso Dr. La Canada Flintridge. Sat. 1-4:30PM; Sun. 9AM-4:30PM. 818/952-4401.

## JAN. 26

**BETTY NEWTON'S CLASSES** Flower Gardens: Year-round Color. 12 Weeks. Grossmont High School, 1100 Murray Dr., La Mesa. Tues. 6:20-9:30PM. 644-8218. \$29.

## JAN. 28

**BETTY NEWTON'S CLASSES** Landscaping: Trees, Shrubs & Flowers. 17 Weeks. Foothills Adult Education Center, 1550 Melody Lane, El Cajon. Thurs. 8:50AM-Noon. 644-8218. \$29.

## JAN. 30

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY CYMBIDIUM SOCIETY** Annual Orchid Auction, 3320 Monroe, Carlsbad. Noon-4:00PM Free parking in rear. 760/753-6952

## FEB. 1

**PALOMAR DISTRICT DESIGN FORUM** Floral Design Program by Four Local Designers. See Jan. 4th for information.

## FEB. 6-7

**SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY** 52nd Annual Show. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Sat. Noon-4PM; Sun. 10AM-4PM. Free.

## Feb. 13

**JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN** Seminar and demos, "The Japanese Garden: Concept and Design." Speakers include: Prof. Makoto Nakamura, Mr. Tokushirou Tamane, Prof. Takeo Uesugi, and Prof. Lennox Tierney. At Balboa

Park Club, 8:30AM-5:00PM. Fee includes bento lunch and copy of Proceedings. Gen. reg. fee \$75, members \$60, full-time students and docents \$40, \$5 fee for walk-in registration. Rain will not prevent demonstrations. 619/232-2721.

## FEB. 13-14

**THE HUNTINGTON** 27th Annual Camellia Show. 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino. Sat. Noon-4:30PM; Sun. 10:30AM-4:30PM. 626/405-2141.

### **SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY**

"Camellias in the Parks 1999" San Diego Wild Animal Park, Covered Walkway. Sat & Sun 10AM-4PM. 466-8097. Free with Admission.

## FEB. 16

### **\*SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION**

Quarterly Dinner Meeting & Program. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Tues. 5:45. 232-5762. \$5.

## FEB. 27-28

**SAN DIEGO CHAPTER OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA** Show & Demonstration. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Sat. & Sun. 11AM-4:30PM. Demonstrations both days at 1, 2, & 3PM. Free.

### **BALBOA PARK: ONGOING PROGRAMS**

#### **SAN DIEGO JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN**

Closed until spring for construction.

#### **SAT. OFFSHOOT TOURS** 1 hour. Meet Botanical Lath

House, 10AM. Tours will resume Jan. 9th. 235-1121. Free.

**ZORO GARDEN NATURE PROGRAM** Balboa Park, between R.H. Fleet Science Ctr. & Casa de Balboa. Programs 1st. Sunday of Month. Noon-1PM. 235-1121.

### **ONGOING EVENTS**

**QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS** 230 Quail Garden Dr., Encinitas. 9AM-5PM. 760/436-4032.

**BLUE SKY ECOLOGICAL RESERVE** Walks. Poway. Sat. & Sun. 9AM. Call 679-5469.

**WALKABOUT INTERNATIONAL** Local Guided Walks. Newsletter 231-SHOE. Free.

**FULLERTON ARBORETUM** Victorian Cities of the World Lecture Series. Feb. 21st. to May 16th. 1900 Associated Rd., Oak Hall, Fullerton. 3-5PM. 714/278-3579. \$30 each or \$100 for series.

**UCLA EXTENSION** "It's About Color...The Essence of the Garden" Jan. 12th to Mar. 30th. Landscape Architecture Program. 1343 Public Policy Bldg. Los Angeles. Tues. 7-10PM. 310/825-9971. Fee \$395.

Deadline for submission to

### **HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR** for

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*THE MAGAZINE FOR THE HANDS-ON GARDENER*

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**FRONT AND BACK COVER illustration by Wallace Austin of hummingbird and butterfly at Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) is the logo of the Sage and Songbirds Festival of Alpine, California.**

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**FLOWER SHOWS:** Show chairman contact *California Garden*, 232-5762 if you want the magazine sold at your show.

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# Gleanings . . .

## FRUIT TREES . . .

Winter is the time to plant bare root fruit trees. Varieties able to grow well in your area are available at your local nurseries. (Varieties that do well can vary from the coast to the mountains.) Standard fruit trees can be quite large, but if your space is limited purchase dwarf varieties. Dwarfs take up much less space but the fruit is as good and the same size as a standard. Dwarf trees can be grown in containers. Whether in the open ground or a container, dwarf or standard, fruit trees need full sun and well drained soil with lots of humus.

## G. WASHINGTON, FARMER . . .

George Washington is remembered in history as the first President of the USA. History tells of his exploits as a surveyor, soldier, and politician, but overlooks the fact that he was a very good farmer. The land he inherited in 1753 was a plantation growing tobacco with slave labor. The bottom had dropped out of the tobacco market and Washington did not approve of slavery, the traditional labor of the plantations. He abandoned tobacco production and started growing wheat and corn as a cash crop. He proudly called himself a farmer not a planter. (Being a planter was more socially acceptable than being a farmer.) He was always willing to try anything new to improve his farm and experimented with seeds, fertilizers, and farm implements. His farm at Mt. Vernon, Virginia—near Washington D.C.—has a wonderful walled kitchen garden. Do not miss visiting it if you are in the area.

One also can purchase plants grown from seeds or cuttings from plants originally grown by George Washington.

## AVOCADOS . . .

Avocados have a long producing period in the San Diego area, from January to December. The peak season is between February and August. The California Avocado Commission suggests that unripe fruit never be refrigerated but stored at 65° to 70°F. until it ripens. Ripe fruit can be refrigerate at 38° to 40°F. for up to one week. To keep a cut avocado from browning sprinkle with lemon or lime juice.

Fresh avocados are a versatile fruit with guacamole being a “must” for many Southern California regional foods. Most local cooks recommend that the seed be left in the bowl to keep the guacamole from browning if it is stored in the refrigerator before being served. (Remove seed before serving.)

## NATURAL LAND . . .

Nearly one-fifth of the plants growing in California's natural land are exotics (plants introduced from other locations). Many plants we consider natives were planted, like the eucalyptus from Australia, and many entered accidentally, like the tumbleweed from Russia. Unfortunately, many of these plants are more vigorous growers than the native plants that are food plants for native wildlife. The invasion of exotic plants not only changes the natural plant community, but it is changing the wildlife community, too, because their food is missing.

## TESTING SEEDS . . .

Have you ever purchased seeds and then not planted them? If your packet is a year old, many of the seeds are probably still viable. It is estimated that about 50% of the seeds survive the first year. This means one should plant about twice as much as recommended. One way to check is to use the “wet towel” method. Wet a double thickness of paper towel and place several seeds about an inch apart across one edge. Next, fold the end of the towel over the seeds and roll up the towel, twist the ends, cover it with a plastic bag, and seal the bag. Place the plastic covered towel in a warm but not sunny place, and open after four or five days. If the seeds do not show any sign of germinating, roll up the towel and seal it again for three more days. If less than half of the seeds germinate, just throw the remainder away. (Unless, of course, it is a rare plant and any results are desirable. After all, seeds hundreds of years old found in caves and tombs have been germinated.)

## HIBISCUS KATE SESSIONS . . .

In our research, we have finally found a reference to a hibiscus named for Kate Sessions. In the Autumn 1959 issue of *California Garden*, on page 4, Jane Minshall writes: “We are planting what is to my mind one of the most beautiful varieties—Hibiscus Kate Sessions.” At the time Jane Minshall was the Landscape Architect for the San Diego City Schools and she was describing her plantings done for the newly finished school named in honor of Kate Sessions. We have not found a description.

# A FLY IN A DRAGON'S ARUM

BY CATHERINE L. ZINSKY

THE UNCOMMON, THAT IS what seems to be in vogue with gardeners these days. If you're seeking a plant to satisfy this appetite, consider *Dracunculus vulgaris* (*Arum dracunculus*). It is certainly uncommon, and in my opinion, unsociable as well.

This dragon arum rises to about three feet from a tuber and has the most unusual and lovely leaves. These leaves are lanceolate, but fanned. They are also very large, perhaps 8-10 inches wide, the middle segment being the longest, the laterals tapering, presenting a fan-shape in outline. And as if the shape were not captivating enough, the leaves are also white-spotted. They are truly unique and exquisite, an outstanding textural addition to any spring garden.

The leaves of this hardy perennial come out of dormancy in spring. In late spring/early summer—this will depend on your microclimate—a flower spathe will begin to emerge and gradually unroll. (A spathe is a bract or leaf surrounding a spadix, which is simply a thick flower spike. A common example of a spathe is the calla lily.) These spathes are huge—up to two feet long!

Their color, a dark purplish-red, is enticing, but all enticement stops there. Actually, you'll want to stop even further back. This is not a flower for potpourris. I fondly call this dragon arum "Dragon's breath," for it is rank. That is right, it smells, stinks, and is otherwise foul-smelling. It smells like rotting meat, and in truth does attract flies, which is why you will want to stop far back to appreciate the glory of this blossom. Though fascinating, the flower is utterly unsociable, unless you are a fly.

In its natural Mediterranean habitat, *D. vulgaris* prospers in rocky waste land. Necessarily in cultivation, this tuber is going to require excellent drainage in an area that is allowed to remain dry in the summer. Plant the tuber about 6 inches deep, and if drainage is questionable, set the tuber on a 2-3 inch bed of sand before refilling. Full sun is best, though this dragon arum will tolerate partial shade.

*Dracunculus vulgaris* is not an easy tuber to acquire. Occasionally it can be found in a bulb mail-order catalog. Check with the better nurseries; some may be willing to order for you. To propagate this thoroughly unusual gem, simply lift the tuber and remove the little baby tubers, called offsets, and replant or share as desired. If you mean to share the offsets, be sure to forewarn your fellow gardener. This is not a plant for the meek and unwary.

Good luck and happy gardening...□

*Photograph by the author.*

*Catherine L. Zinsky gardens at about 1,900 feet in Crest. She is a free-lance writer for garden and canine publications.*



## SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY

presents

### CAMELLIAS IN THE PARKS, 1999

Sat. February 6, noon - 4 pm

Sun. February 7, 10 am - 4 pm

**Balboa Park**, Casa del Prado, Room 101  
&

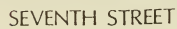
Sat. & Sun. February 13-14 10 am - 4 pm

**San Diego Wild Animal Park**

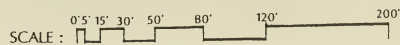
Covered Walkway



## S P R E C K E L S   P A R K   W E S T



S P R E C K E L S   P A R K   E A S T





# AN URBAN FOREST ADVENTURE: THE STORY OF SPRECKELS PARK IN CORONADO, PART II

BY SUZANNE R. HEAP

*Before 1884 Coronado was a desolate and deserted wasteland inhabited by jack rabbits and coyotes. This is a continuing account of the development of the area.*

CENTRAL PLAZA PARK on Coronado Island was taking on a new look. A bandstand was installed in the east park in 1891 and the west side became the home in 1900 of The Spreckels Library.

A *Coronado Mercury News* article in January 1894 illustrated how important parks and shade trees were to Claus Spreckels' The Coronado Beach Company. Compensation paid to their superintendent of park and shade trees was \$2.00 a day, while all other employees of the city were receiving \$1.50 a day. There were some hurt feelings and the "other" employees had their compensation raised to a daily \$1.75.

With no city government yet, in April of 1894, the Coronado Beach Company formed a Park and Shade Tree Committee. Early on, before piped in irrigation was available, the park and street trees were watered by the Coronado Water Wagon as it watered down the dirt streets. The Committee realized that the water wagon was not fully meeting the trees' water needs. An advertisement was placed in the *San Diego Union* asking for irrigation workers to come to Coronado and work on teams to handwater the trees.

In 1901 Louis C. Bandel became Superintendent of Parks and remained in that position for 40 years. He planted most of the trees in Coronado's parks and on city property including parking strips, before he retired in 1941. In his early days, he was assisted by Kate Sessions. Kate was responsible for planting some of the Torrey pines in Coronado, raising them at her nursery, then in Mission Hills.

Kate Sessions, the well-known horticulturist and garden designer, owned a nursery in the 200 block of "C" Avenue on Coronado into the 1890s. There she cultivated some of the trees and plants that she used to landscape the Hotel del Coronado and many private gardens.

By 1915, *The Coronado Strand*, as the newspaper was then called, stated that an irrigation system was installed and "The water was turned on for the final test.

The Coronado Beach Company trustees visited the scene during the day and expressed themselves as being entirely satisfied with the work." There were nearly five hundred "squirters" (their term) in the east park system. The squirters were divided into several units so that the various parts could be irrigated at the pleasure of the man in charge of the park. The cost of the system installed by "the sewer gang" was under the \$1800 allowed. Trees, shrubs, and lawn no longer needed to be hand watered.

Visitors to east park today enjoy the trees, especially during the annual Coronado Flower Show in April and the Summer Sunday Evening Concerts. In this eastern (bandstand) side grows a tall, erect and handsome Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) (see B8 on map) with its impenetrable head 75 feet high. This old tree is surrounded by the June Miller Victorian Garden. It is tended now and has been for many years by June Miller with other members of The City Beautification Committee of the Crown Garden Club. Many mature Canary Island date palms have had to be removed from Coronado home gardens. Small lot owners failed to consider their mature size and width.



Canary Island Palm  
*Phoenix canariensis*



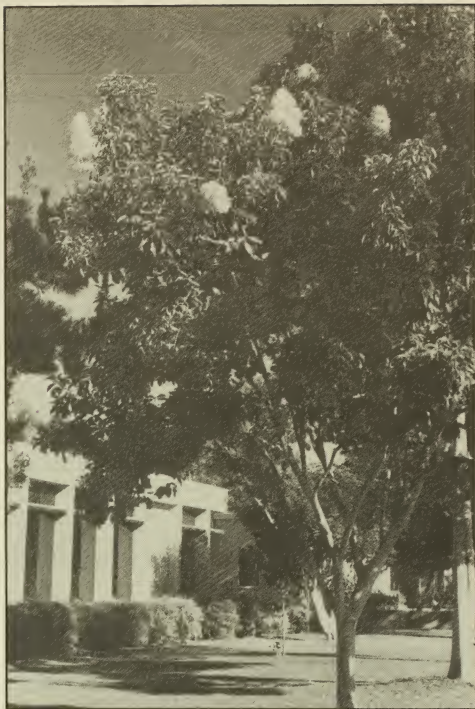
Canary Island Pine  
*Pinus canariensis*

Adjacent to the restroom there is a peppermint tree or Australian willow myrtle (*Agonis flexuosa*) (M) with its rich and beautiful red-brown colored bark. It's a handsome tree of 30 feet with ¾-inch scented white flowers in June and July. The leaves give off the odor of peppermint.

Surrounding the current bandstand area one finds examples of several very old palms and pines. The queen palm (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*) on the map listed as (*Arecastrum romanzoffianum*) (B1), from Brazil and Argentina, is a feather palm gracefully arching, with a medium growth to 50 feet and 20 foot spread. Scars are formed on the trunk when a frond drops. The king palm (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*) (B2) from Australia, a 30-foot feather palm, is distinguishable from the queen palm in that its dead fronds shed cleanly leaving a smooth, unscarred gray trunk.

A Canary Island pine (*Pinus canariensis*) (N1) is there with 11-inch needles and a conical to egg-shaped top rapidly growing to 50 feet. It has a useful life of 75 years. This pine, Roland Hoyt writes in his *Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions*, is probably the best large pine for a small space. Another pine, the Aleppo (*Pinus halepensis*) (N4), with its 50-foot height and round to spreading top, can also be seen here. From the Mediterranean, it is a rugged looking tree, not especially ornamental. Nearby, the Italian stone pine (*Pinus pinea*) (N2) from southern Europe is a rounded, bushy thing in early life, becoming open-headed and picturesque in age and gradually loosing its lower limbs.

Many other fine trees can be seen in this bandstand area and easily identified using "A Botanical Guide to the Trees of Spreckels Park in Coronado, California"



*Calodendrum capense*



*Araucaria heterophylla*

prepared by Peg Bryant in 1986 when she was horticulture chairman of the Crown Garden Club. The map is available from the reference librarian at the Coronado Public Library, 640 Orange Avenue. It shows over forty different varieties of trees growing in both the east and west parks.

On the west side of Coronado's Spreckels Park, the library entrance is marked by two large Norfolk Island pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) (C). This short-needled evergreen often has a star-like top and reaches a height of one hundred feet. The Norfolk Island pine is not a pine as its common name suggests but is a primitive conifer, bearing cones.

A San Diego coastal native, one of the rarest trees in the world, the Torrey pine (*Pinus torreyana*) (N3) is growing



northeast of the library entrance. It is said to be one of the finest specimens of this tree in existence—luxurious and unstunted. It shows what care and the Coronado climate will do! The tree is evident in a 1910 picture of the library so it must be about ninety years old.

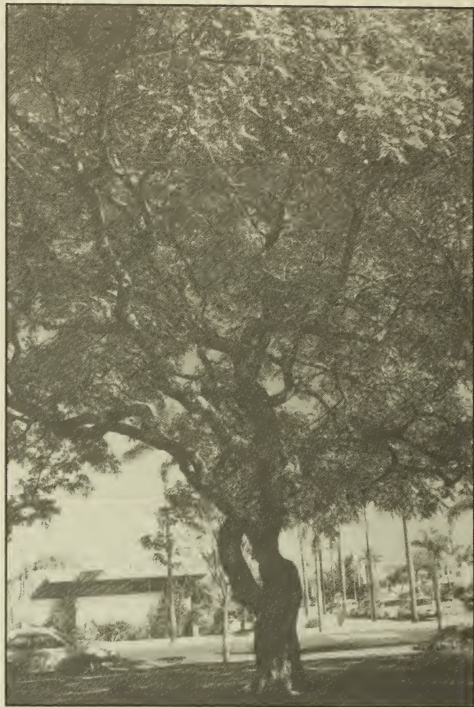
Consult the map for the location of other trees growing on the library side of the park.

South of the library, toward Seventh Street, more recently planted trees include the coral, or Kaffir boom, (*Erythrina caffra*) (K1) with coral-red blooms appearing at the end of massive, fast-growing branches; a carob or St. John's bread tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*) (G) from the Mediterranean; and a floss silk tree (*Chorisia speciosa*) (D) from South America, which has unusual stout gray-green spines set on a yellow-green trunk and, in autumn, bright pink flowers that are large and showy. They somewhat resemble a narrow-petaled hibiscus. A Catalina cherry (*Prunus lyonii*) (AA), native to the Channel Islands, and a rustyleaf fig (*Ficus rubiginosa*) (U3), an Australian native, are also found in this area.

North of the library entrance, past the Torrey pine, grows an African tulip tree (*Spathodea campanulata*) (W) given to the park by a long-time Coronado landscape architect, Ed Campbell. Many trees in Coronado's twenty parks are examples of his generosity.

Across the sidewalk from the Torrey pine grows a cape chestnut (*Calodendrum capense*) (Q), originating in South Africa. This domed tree has a spectacular May to June bloom period, known to repeat in autumn. The rose-lilac flowers, in loose but prim heads, look like a large powder puff; the tree itself is a large puff when it's in full bloom.

The cork oak (*Quercus suber*) (E), from the Mediterranean, with its cork bark and irregular branches forming a broad, slightly asymmetrical crown adds shade



*Tipuana tipu*

and character to this part of the park. At the north corner, at Sixth Avenue, is a spectacular tipu tree (*Tipuana tipu*) (X), originating in Argentina, Bolivia, and southern Brazil. The tipu is a light-textured tree whose leaves are made of many oval leaflets. It has small clusters of yellow-tinted, pea-like flowers blooming into summer. This tree grows very rapidly and has surface roots.

Nothing makes a community more attractive than its trees. Please visit Spreckels Park and some of the first trees planted on Coronado. □

*Suzanne R. Heap is a landscape and garden consultant, UCCE Master Gardener, and past president of Crown Garden Club of Coronado.*

*Photographs by Betty Newton.*

*Illustrations by Mary B. and Fred Pomeroy and/or Mary Foley Benson.*



*Quercus suber* cork bark

# BOTANICAL GUIDE TO THE TREES OF SPRECKELS PARK

C O R O N A D O , C A .

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Y2 P. TOBIRA
- V1 METASEQUOIA GLYPTOSTROBILIS – Dawn Redwood
- Y3 PITTOSPORUM PHILLYRAEOLIS – Willow Pittosporum
- Z BRACHYCHITON POPULNEUS – Bottle Tree
- AA PRUNUS LYONII – Catalina Cherry
- BB LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA – Crape Myrtle
- CC CALLIANDRA  
CC1 C. TWEEDII (C. GUILDINGII) – Trinidad or Brazilian Flame Bush  
CC2 C. HAEMATOCEPHALA (C. INAEQUILATERA) – Pink Powder Puff
- DD CUPRESSUS – Cypress  
DD1 C. ARIZONICA or C. GLABRA – Arizona Cypress or Smooth-Barked A.C.  
DD2 C. SEMPERVIRENS, cv. PYRAMIDALIS – Italian Cypress
- EE CUPANOPSIS ANACARDIOPSIS – Carrot Wood, Tuckeroo
- FF LIQUIDAMBAR STYRACIFLUA – Sweet Gum, American Sweet Gum
- GG ACACIA  
GG1 A. DECURRENS  
GG2 A. MELANOXYLON – Blackwood, Australian Blackwood
- HH GREVILLEA ROBUSTA – Silk Oak
- II JACARANDA MIMOSIFOLIA
- JJ
- KK TRISTANIA CONFERTA – Brisbane Box (related to eucalyptus)
- LL DODONAEA – Hop Bush  
LL1 DODONAEA VISCOSA  
LL2 D.V. PURPUREA – Purple Hop Bush
- MM BRASSAJA ACTINOPHYLLA (ISCHEFFLERA ACTINOPHYLLA) – Umbrella Tree
- NN LEUCAENA
- PP CORDYLONE – Dracaena
- QQ QUERCUS ILEX – Holly Oak
- RR CINNAMOMUM CAMPHORA – Camphor Tree
- SS PLATANUS ACERIFOLIA – London Plane Tree

• T H E C R O W N G A R D E N C L U B , C O R O N A D O , C A . •

Coordinated by PEG BRYANT, Horticulture Chairwoman

\* Tree identification by : DAVE BRAZER – Parks Supervisor, Coronado Public Services • ALLAN BREDESON – International Palm Society, So. Calif. Chapter • PEG BRYANT •

• ED CAMPBELL – Landscape Architect, Coronado • DAVE JONES – Director, Coronado Golf Course • TOM LUEDTKE – San Diego Zoo, Horticulture Department • DAN SIMPSON – San Diego Zoo, Horticulture Department •

\* Mapping and Graphics by :

THE  
ACKERMAN/  
GROUP/ARCHITECTURE,  
PLANNING & PRESERVATION, A.L.A.  
233 A Street Suite 100 San Diego California 92101-4050 619-232-7005



## A BACKYARD WILDLIFE HABITAT

BY THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S demonstration Backyard Wildlife Habitat site in Vienna, Virginia, serves many purposes. It shows homeowners what they can do for wildlife in their own backyards; it serves as a place for NWF staff to relax and observe wildlife while on a break or to volunteer during Friday lunch time "garden work parties," and it is used almost daily by school, scout, and other youth groups for educational purposes. **This site provides the four basic elements of wildlife habitat:**

**FOOD** - Shrubs and trees provide fruits and seeds throughout the year for backyard wildlife. The demonstration habitat's woody plants that provide food are sweet gum, blueberry, sumac, bayberry, several types of holly, viburnum, cotoneaster, and crabapple. Perennials and annuals are planted to provide nectar for both butterflies and hummingbirds. Hummingbirds visit bee balm, pineapple sage, wild columbine, cardinal flower, and trumpet honeysuckle. Butterflies visit butterfly weed, butterfly bush, lantana, purple coneflower, garden phlox, zinnias, and Mexican sunflower. Supplemental feeders provide nectar for hummingbirds in the summer months, and provide a variety of seeds (sunflower, niger, safflower, and millet) for birds throughout the year.

**WATER** - A pedestal-mounted birdbath adds a touch of decorative statuary to the habitat. The heavy base provides stable support for the easy-to-clean top. A small shallow water dish provides water for drinking and bathing. Placed on the ground, this simple birdbath also provides water for mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Two small ponds, easily duplicated in most landscapes, provide an aquatic habitat for dragonflies, fish, newts, frogs, and other aquatic life. One pond is made of pre-molded fiberglass and the other of flexible, PVC plastic liner material. Depending on soil and drainage conditions, a liner may not be needed. A thermostatically controlled birdbath heater provides water, a critical winter need for wildlife during subfreezing weather.

**COVER** - Several evergreen trees and shrubs provide year-round protective cover from weather and predators. Featured in the demonstration habitat are juniper, yew, holly grape, and hollies. Deciduous shrubs offer effective summer cover for nesting and escape from predators. Red-twig dogwood, bayberry, viburnums, and

cotoneasters are massed in the habitat. Rock, log, and mulch piles offer very effective cover. Small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and a great variety of insects and other small animals find homes in these structures, which are easy to construct.

**PLACES TO RAISE YOUNG** - Nest boxes for bluebirds, chickadees, wrens, and purple martins have been placed in the demonstration habitat. Evergreens, deciduous trees, and shrubs provide additional nesting areas for birds. Rabbits, shrews, mice, snakes, and salamanders lay their eggs or raise their young under the boughs of plants as well as in the rock, log, or mulch piles. Aquatic and amphibious species, such as frogs, toads, newts, dragonflies, and other insects, deposit their eggs in the ponds. Butterfly eggs and caterpillars find safety among the herbs, flowers, shrubs, and trees of the habitat.

Locally, people interested can contact CHIRP for additional information from the National Wildlife Federation at 619/445-7675. □

## THIS "BALCONY HABITAT" FEEDS FLOCKS OF BIRDS

BY MAUREEN AUSTIN

ALPINE, CALIFORNIA IS HOME to one of the smallest Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitats in the nation.

Fran "Franky" Day, has created a haven for flocks of hungry songbirds in her small balcony habitat, where she has sacrificed chair space for herself in lieu of food, water, shelter and nesting area for the wild birds.

With sage and other plants for nectar, a passion vine for butterflies and their caterpillars, and a dwarf lemon tree—all in pots—there exists little room for Fran to sit! But she enjoys the wildlife show from inside her apartment at Creekside Meadows.

The habitat, one of the smallest ever certified by the National Wildlife Federation, also includes seed feeders for songbirds, and sugar-water feeders for hummingbirds. Birds have their choice of nest sites in either a birdhouse or the *Liquidambar* tree that almost touches her second-story balcony. (As Fran and I chatted, a flock of lesser goldfinch hung like acrobats to eat from the tree's spiny seed pods. What a show!)

And just as Fran predicted, at exactly noon the birds came in for lunch—in hoards! She said they are always there for breakfast between 6:30 and 7AM, lunch at noon, and dinner at 5PM sharp!

"They are eating me out of house and home," she

joked. But as the seed level dropped before my eyes, I could see there was an element of truth to her comment.

Feeding the birds has not been without its challenges for Fran. When she first hung the seed feeders, a portion of the birdseed was dropping to the balcony below, and the recipient neighbor was concerned that it might attract rodents.

Not wanting to present a problem to the neighbor, but not wanting to disappoint her feathered friends, Fran attached a large tray to the bottom of each feeder to catch the seed.

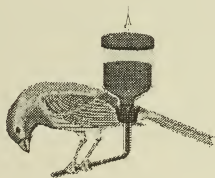
Although she enjoys all the birds, her favorite is a young Anna's hummingbird, with a rose-colored throat and crown. "He just looks young," she said. Several hummers, including her favorite, visited her two nectar feeders in the short time I was there, on a cold December day.

It is evident that Fran loves hummingbirds—one was printed on her shirt, another hung on a necklace around her neck, others served as refrigerator magnets, yet others as sun-catchers in the window.

"I can't remember when I wasn't interested in hummingbirds," she said.

And that has been a while—Fran is 87!□

*Reprinted from the 1998 Sage & Songbirds Festival Program. This festival is a project of CHIRP (Center to Help Instill Respect & Preservation) of Alpine. Maureen Austin is executive director of CHIRP for Garden Wildlife, and project coordinator for "Sage & Songbirds."*



## **ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW & BAZAAR OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA, SAN DIEGO CHAPTER**

Saturday, Feb 27 & Sunday, Feb 28, 1999  
Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

Show is open from 11:00 to 4:30 PM & is free of charge. Flower arrangement demonstrations will be at 1:00, 2:00 and 3:00 PM both days.

## **ANYTHING BUT HO-HUM:**

**THE ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD<sup>®</sup>**

**BY PAT PAWLOWSKI**

REMEMBER THE OLD TELEVISION show called *Sing Along With Mitch*? Well, here is your chance to Hum Along With Anna (Anna's Hummingbird, scientifically known as *Archilochus anna*).

We Southern Californians take so much for granted: Sunny skies, passable winters, casual Fridays and our resident hummingbird, the Anna. Many of us may have grown blasé about our little "flower kisser," which is one of many charming nicknames for the hummingbird. We've grown accustomed to the little buzzers zooming by, stopping to sip from outstretched floral goblets or a hanging feeder. However, we've gotten far too casual (especially on Fridays?) about taking care of the Anna's needs. Perhaps we've forgotten to fill the feeder, or we've not bothered to include, or tend, nectar-rich flowers in the garden.

So then, one day, silence.

Some of us may have gotten involved in too many other things—a new job, a new hobby, a new house perhaps—and have forgotten Anna, forgotten until one day we notice something missing: a flash of crimson, a happy buzz, a lively presence.

The garden gets boring without Anna.

### **ANNA WHO?**

Way back in the early 1800s, Prince François Victor Massena, a French nobleman-naturalist, who had a huge collection of stuffed birds, acquired some hummingbirds from North America. Eventually one little hummingbird species was named after the Prince's wife, Anna de Belle Massena, either because she had brilliant crimson feathers growing out of her head or was exceedingly gorgeous. Hummingbirds (stuffed, unfortunately) captivated the Continent and many eventually wound up as decorations on women's hats.

### **IDENTIFYING THE ANNA**

Of the three hummingbird species that are frequent visitors to San Diego County yards, the Anna's male is the only one with rose-red iridescence on the top of both the head and the throat. The Anna's female is not as colorful (the only red iridescence occurs in a tiny spot on the throat) but is certainly more congenial (a territorial male will spend countless hours chasing away others from a feeder with numerous nectar stations, while females are more willing to share the feeder). Both males and females have gorgeous green backs.



Anna's Hummingbird, showing head pollination on a  
*Tecomaria capensis*

#### ATTRACTING THE ANNA

To get a yard humming with hummers, a generous gardener will provide water for bathing (for the bird, that is); trees and shrubs for shelter and nesting; and flower nectar for swigging.

**Drawing the Bath** — In general, the sound of running water will draw birds. Since the Anna cannot stand and bathe, he or she may fly through gentle spray from a garden hose, skim through a shallow birdbath, or even dip into a cupped leaf filled with rainwater. The important thing is to provide water in some form or other.

**Supplying the Shelter** — Hummingbird females may nest in crazy places like porch lights, wind chimes, and potted plants. However, females usually will not nest too close to a feeder, so a plant or tree some distance away from feeders might be attractive to them.

Trees and shrubs also provide shelter from thundering storms and pandemonious winds. Sometimes a hummer will adopt a particular tree as a perching place; it might be near a feeder, for example. Or perhaps a female will choose a particular tree as a nesting place. If you have a cat problem (or problem cat), you might plant barrier-type shrubbery around the bottom of the nesting plant. Shrubs that can be used as barriers include some varieties of acacia, bougainvillea, berberis, grevillea, gooseberry, ilex, mahonia, and rose. If you have trouble selecting a barrier plant: Go to a nursery. Grab a plant. If you yell "ouch," then you

know it's a barrier type.

Some plants are instrumental in providing nesting material. The Baby Season for Anna's Hummingbird starts after about three good rains, when native nectar plants start blooming, so keep a watchful eye out for fallen babies (sometimes they tumble out of the nest). And, speaking of nests, shrub-type willows provide downy filaments when they go to seed; hummer moms use this material in nest construction. Another plant that provides nesting material is the Japanese anemone. Just be sure not to cut off the flower heads; let them go to seed and perhaps you'll see an Anna mom collect the fibers to build her nest. What holds the nest together is, believe it or not, spider silk. (So appreciate those spiders!)

**NOTE:** One way to appreciate beneficial insects is NOT to spray toxic potions like herbicides and pesticides all over the place. The hideous brews will settle like a cloud of death over your yard, and you will wind up with no life at all in the garden. Nectar may be infused with the toxins and hummers and other nectar feeders will die. Learn to like bugs, at least some of them, and forget the bug spray.

**Serving Up the Nectar** — Now for the really fun part. You get to pick out plants with pretty flowers. However, not all pretty faces will suffice. A rose, for example, will not interest a hummer in the least. To the hummer, it is juiceless. Instead, plant some of Anna's favorite nectar plants, which include:

(1) Cape Honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*) - According to a hummingbird team leader for Project Wildlife, the nectar of cape honeysuckle is one of Anna's favorite foods. As an aside: Project Wildlife is an organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of our wildlife. If you should happen to come upon a hummer in distress, call Project Wildlife at 619/273-2738.

Now, back to cape honeysuckle. It's evergreen, has vibrant red-orange flowers in fall and winter, grows like a weed, is drought tolerant, and attracts hummers. A humdinger of a plant. To illustrate, imagine this scene: New house. Rocks. Bare dirt. Silence. Add: One cape honeysuckle. Result, after only one day: Gentle humming, coming from a bird. Next day: More hummingbirds. Next day: Back to the local nursery to buy another cape honeysuckle.

(2) Lantana (*Lantana*) - Ubiquitous, but why not? Lantana, especially the type with red-orange flowers, is very attractive to hummingbirds. The dark berries are eaten by birds like house finches, robins, mockingbirds, and California quail. The sun-loving plant is evergreen and blooms almost year-round in mild climes.



(3) Pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*) - Leaves delicious in iced drinks. Smells great. Pretty flowers. Grows 2 to 3 feet.

(4) Acacia (*Acacia*) - Many kinds, all with flowers in some shade of yellow, which illustrates the fact that hummers like flowers of many colors, as long as the blooms contain nectar. Acacia's water needs are nil. All are virtually pest-free and grow quickly.

(5) Blood-red trumpet vine (*Distictis buccinatoria*) - Sounds like an upscale restaurant to me. However, it's a fast-growing evergreen vine with big 4-inch long trumpet-like flowers.

(6) Fuchsia (*Fuchsia*) - Very popular with hummers and humans alike. However, it likes protection from the hot sun, and prefers cool summers and moist air.

(7) California fuchsia (*Zauschneria californica* or more recently, *Epilobium californica*) - Perennial herb one to three feet high with delicate reddish coral bell-like flowers and gray-green leaves. Beloved by the Anna. Easy to grow and drought-tolerant.



*Arbutus unedo*



*Ribes speciosum*

(8) Fuchsia-flowering gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) - Evergreen shrub four to eight feet tall. This plant means business; it has bristly branches that are armed with spines where the dark green leaves meet the stems. It is good-looking, but don't try to hug it.

(9) Willows (*Salix spp.*) - Deciduous trees and shrubs, all water grabbers. The shrubby kinds are known for their warm and fuzzy catkins, and are not overpowering in the home landscape. Willows offer nectar; they also attract small insects like fruit flies and gnats, which comprise a good portion of an adult hummer's diet. Willows are also a larval-food plant of the western tiger swallowtail butterfly and the photogenic mourning cloak.

(10) Dwarf strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo* 'Elfin King') - Here is a surprise: A good friend of mine mentioned that a hummer had visited the blossoms of her dwarf strawberry tree—a variety that gets to be about 4-6 feet tall, which is perfect for smaller gardens. As strawberry tree owners know, the plant is most noted for its gloriously decorative red and yellow fruits, which hang like ornaments from its evergreen branches. And now we find out Anna likes it too!

(11) Hummingbird Feeder (*Feederosia plasticus*) - Sturdy; won't lose its leaves (it hasn't any). Won't freeze. Won't self-seed (it doesn't have any). Occurs in store habitat.

Now to get really serious: If you intend using a store feeder, clean it THOROUGHLY twice a week or even more in hot weather.

Mix one part sugar to four parts water. Boil, then cool. This mix closely approximates flower nectar, which is mostly sucrose, just like table sugar. You DO NOT need to add red food coloring; most store feeders have color on them anyway, and no one knows for sure just what food coloring does to the birds. Store-bought nectar, red as red can be, may cost ten times as much as your own mix.

Note: If you are making your own nectar, following the above recipe is crucial; if the nectar is proportionately too high in sugar, you may be giving the hummers cancer. So don't put in extra sugar; it's bad for the birds. Remember: only four to one.

Other plants that serve up varying amounts of nectar include: bottlebrush, monkey flower, tree tobacco, foxglove, agave, Indian paintbrush, ceanothus, chasmanthe, manzanita, lupine, and aloe.

#### ASSETS OF THE ANNA

Besides being so darned cute, hummingbirds provide pollination service to many of our finest plants. So, environment-wise, we see that hummers do a lot more than just hum.

Let's do our part by making Anna welcome, so we can again have happy, healthy, hummersome yards, just the way nature intended. □

*Hummingbird illustration by Marilyn Hoff Stewart.  
Text copyright by Pat Pawlowski, who is a writer/lecturer and the wildlife garden designer for Animated Gardens.*

**February 18**

*Butterfly Gardening lecture by Pat Pawlowski at Bernardo Gardeners meeting on Thursday, 2:00PM in the Community Room, Rancho Bernardo Library, 619/485-9020.*



## SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION BUS TOURS

### TOUR, TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 1999

A 22.5 acre estate that once was home to a Hollywood legend has been chosen as the star of this trip. It is located in a wooded Malibu canyon, with park-like grounds, a creek, waterfalls, bridges, sycamores, some beds of flowering perennials, and five homes. We will have the privilege of visiting three of them: "The Barn," a rustic A-frame; the "Peach House", a Mediterranean-style mansion (only the fourth floor theatre room); and the "Deco House." The guided tour will take us by a vine-covered pink stucco and "Barwood," a contemporary Craftsman with weathered gray wood.

This tour is limited to fourteen people and will cost about \$70.00. Pick-ups at Mission Valley (San Diego) and Hadley's (Carlsbad) only. If interested, call Ann Waters at 277-5004.

### OTHER FUTURE TOURS

#### SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 1999

☐ \$28.00 Members (who pay dues to SDFA)

Lunch is on your own

Make checks payable to San Diego Floral Association

Mail to San Diego Floral Association

2125 Park Boulevard

San Diego, California 92101-4792

Please include a stamped/addressed envelope

Name(s):

Address:

Telephone Number:

#### PICK-UP TIMES NOT SET

- ☐ Red Lobster Park/Ride, Grossmont Ctr, La Mesa AM
- ☐ Mission Valley on Camino del Este south of B/A AM
- ☐ Hadley's at Palomar Airport Road - Carlsbad AM

#### SAN DIEGO COUNTY CYMBIDIUM SOCIETY

### ANNUAL ORCHID AUCTION

Date: Saturday January 30, 1999

Time: 12:00-4:00 PM

Place: Woman's Club of Carlsbad

3320 Monroe, Carlsbad

(FREE PARKING IN REAR OF BUILDING)

Info: (760) 753-6952

Featuring lots of orchids!

Blooming plants!

Great Prices!

Culture sheets and refreshments will be available

#### SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION LOTUSLAND WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1999

☐ \$50.00 Members (who pay dues to SDFA)

Box Lunch, Buffet Dinner, Snack Included

Make checks payable to San Diego Floral Association

Mail to San Diego Floral Association

2125 Park Boulevard

San Diego CA 92101-4792

Please include a stamped/addressed envelope

Name(s):

Address:

Telephone Number:

#### PICK-UPS

- ☐ Red Lobster Park/Ride, Grossmont Center, La Mesa 6:00AM
- ☐ Mission Valley on Camino del Este, south of B/A 6:30AM
- ☐ Hadley's at Palomar Airport Road, Carlsbad 7:00AM



## Now is the Time . . .

A CULTURAL CALENDAR OF CARE FROM OUR AFFILIATES, UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, AND CALIFORNIA GARDEN STAFF

### AFRICAN VIOLETS

Mort Brigadier

#### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO SIMPLY** sit back and enjoy our African violets.

**TO SEPARATE** and repot only if daughter plants are pushing the mother plant up and out of the pot.

**TO RETURN** those plants that you may have moved during the holidays.

**TO EXPERIMENT** by wick-watering some plants, bottom-watering others, and top-watering a third group.

**TO USE** a humidifier for your plants if you heat your home and awaken with a dry throat.

### BEGONIAS

American Begonia Society

#### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO WATCH** the watering program; slower growth requires less water. Do not allow to dry out or to become too wet.

**TO KEEP** plants clean; remove dead leaves and old foliage.

**TO START** cutting back cane-type and shrub-like types.

**TO ADD** more planting mix as needed to keep roots covered.

**TO SPRAY** for mildew.

**TO CONTROL** slugs, snails, mealybugs and loopers.

**TO START** in February tuberous types for summer blooms.

### BONSAI

San Diego Bonsai Club

#### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO COLLECT** native stock in the California region. Plant the native trees in a larger container, not a bonsai pot.

**TO GRAFT** conifers, deciduous and evergreen trees.

**TO USE** lime-sulfur spray on deciduous trees.

**TO REDUCE** watering if a rainy period.

**TO PRUNE** fruit-bearing bonsai.

**TO WATCH** for aphids and other sucking insects; spray accordingly.

**TO REMEMBER NOT** to fertilize your trees. Allow plants to rest.

**TO START** in February to repot and transplant some varieties if weather is favorable.

### BROMELIADS

Mary Siemers

#### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO KEEP** plants from damage by possible hail. Give them overhead protection such as placing them under trees, shade cloth or any other suitable material.

**TO PROTECT** plants from freezing temperatures; keep at least 2 inches above ground and cover with newspapers, sheets, etc. or bring them indoors.

**TO BE** careful when having plants indoors not to place them in front of a heating vent or in a drafty area.

**TO EMPTY** water from outdoor plants when it has rained consistently for two or three days. The weight of too much water can cause the leaves to spread apart, affecting the compact form.

**TO CUT** the frequency of watering during the cooler weather.

**TO NOT** fertilize until weather begins to warm.

### CACTI & SUCCULENTS

Joseph A. Betzler

#### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO REMEMBER** to rest winter dormant plants and keep the winter growers happy. Be careful with water and fertilizer as it gets cold—water in the early part of a sunny day so water will evaporate and fungi will not start easily. If it looks like rain, hold off on the water.

**TO PROTECT** outside plants from excessive rain if possible. If frost is likely, a little protection with a piece of paper or plastic can save a plant. Many tropical succulents will turn into a mass of soggy pulp if frozen. Remember to remove cover when conditions become more favorable.

**TO WATCH** new cuttings—they may not root quickly. If you can supply bottom heat you should not have much of a problem.

**TO KEEP** an eye on the seedlings. Fungi can be a problem at this time. Snails can make a great midnight snack of the seedlings—use some form of snail and slug control if needed.

**TO CLEAN** up old pots and pick up the last of the old leaves and other debris. You do not want to

encourage mice and roof rats. Rodents can make a mess of your prize plants.

**TO NOTE** those plants you want to propagate the next growing season. Find out how to make new starts. Plan your spring display now.

## CAMELLIAS

Les Baskerville

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO FEED** iron and gypsum to maintain healthy, green plants, and 0-10-10 or a 2-10-10 fertilizer to encourage better blooms and root development.

**TO CONTINUE** to disbud certain varieties for better blooms.

**TO OBTAIN** rootstock for grafting.

**TO TRANSPLANT** or bare root camellias.

**TO PRUNE** selectively so that blooms will have room to open.

**TO BUY** plants in bloom. Some plants that do well in San Diego are; **Red**: 'Dr. Clifford Parks', 'Guilio Nuccio', 'Kraemer's Supreme', 'Rudolph'; **Pink**: 'Tiffany', 'Elsie Jury', 'Al Gunn', 'Debutante', 'Valentine Day'; **White**: 'Nuccio's Gem', 'Scentuous' (fragrant); **Variegated**: 'Emma Gaeta Var', 'Adolphe Audusson Special', 'Dixie Knight Supreme', 'Rudolph Var'; **Multi-colored**: 'Margaret Davis'.

## DAHLIAS

Abe Janzen

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO DIG** any tubers left in the ground. By early January the tops should be completely withered. Cut tops just above the ground.

**TO STORE** tubers without dividing. Store in vermiculite or sand, leaving on the soil that clings to them. Keep in a cool place.

**TO INSPECT** those tubers stored earlier for any sign of shriveling. If too dry, add a little moisture.

**TO START** in February to prepare the planting bed. Turn the soil, add humus and fumigate. Dig in humus and add equal parts of superphosphate and sulfate of potash. Turn over well. Add fertilizer two or three weeks before planting.

**TO SPROUT** some selected roots in February—these make good cuttings. Bottom heat may be applied to encourage sprouting.

## EPIPHYLLUMS

San Diego Epiphyllum Society

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO TAKE** advantage of beneficial rains. Collect the rainwater for future use. Store in opaque containers to prevent infestation of mosquito larvae and buildup of

algae.

**TO PROTECT** plants from unexpected frost and strong wintery winds.

**TO BAIT** for snails and slugs.

**TO SPRAY** insecticides only if necessary. Do not use oil-base types. Use Orthene™, malathion, and Cygon™ available locally. Read and follow directions carefully.

**TO PRUNE** out dead and unsightly growth, allowing more energy to be used by newer and healthier branches.

**TO FEED** mature plants with a 0-10-10 fertilizer to promote blooming in spring. Use liquid or slow-release granules. Another application may be necessary in about thirty days.

## FERNS

San Diego Fern Society

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO SPRAY** for aphids, especially maidenhair.

**TO WATER** gently, but do not soak. On cool nights soaking keeps their feet too cold. Do not rely on rain to find your hidden and covered plants—they may remain dry.

**TO TRIM** off old fronds in frost free areas.

**TO FERTILIZE** *Platyceriums* (stag horns) with bone meal, hoof & horn, or high nitrogen liquid.

**TO REMOVE** and remount *Platycerium* pups.

**TO PLANT** spores.

**TO CHECK** for spider mites on the underside of fronds. Mites are very small and may not be seen. Fronds will be silvery on top and start to turn brown. Spray with malathion or miticide.

**TO REPOT**, rebasket and divide ferns in frost free areas.

## FRUIT TREES AND VINES

Vincent Lazaneo, Hort. Advisor UC Coop Extension  
NOW IS THE TIME

**TO FINISH** pruning dormant deciduous trees and vines before leaf buds start to grow.

**TO PRUNE** evergreens just before or when new growth begins.

**TO SPRAY** dormant deciduous trees and vines with horticultural oil before buds begin to open to control overwintering insect pests.

**TO SPRAY** dormant peach and nectarine trees with a fungicide such as lime sulfur (calcium polysulfide) before buds begin to open to control leaf curl.

**TO PLANT** dormant bare-root trees and vines.

**TO PAINT** the trunks with whitewash to protect the bark from sunburn injury.

**TO PROVIDE** frost protection for young citrus and other subtropical fruit trees.

## FUCHSIAS

San Diego Fuchsia Society

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO PRUNE** fuchsias severely if not done in the fall.  
**TO CLEAN** up all leaves and other trash in baskets, pots and around ground plants.

**TO SPRAY** remaining foliage and ground to eradicate pests that may winter over.

**TO KEEP** plants moist but not wet.

**TO FEED** with a good fertilizer—fish (10-5-5) or a slow release type. These can be used for your year-round feeding.

**TO USE** insecticides or fungicides if there is a problem.

## GERANIUMS (Pelargoniums)

Carol Roller

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO WATER** thoroughly when plants become somewhat dry. Allow the excess water to drain away. Keep foliage as dry as possible. Relocate potted plants if there is prolonged rain.

**TO CONTINUE** feeding with a balanced fertilizer with micronutrients. Use at less than the recommended strength. Apply as often as needed to avoid nutritional deficiencies.

**TO CONTINUE** a pest control and disease prevention program. Use all products according to the manufacturers' instructions.

**TO PRUNE** any plants that have not been cut back. At least one green leaf should remain on stems of regals, scented and similar types. Lanky plants, which were previously pruned, can be cut back to produce compact plants. Tip pinch plants that were pruned in the fall.

**TO MAKE** cuttings from the prunings. Shelter the cuttings from extreme weather. Placing them in a warm location will produce roots more rapidly.

**TO PROTECT** plants from freezing temperatures. Temporary coverings may be used.

**TO CONTINUE** to rotate plants to keep them well-shaped.

## HERBS

John Noble

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO BREATHE** in deeply the fragrance of your herb garden, during or after a winter rain.

**TO PLANT** seeds of winter flowering herbs — calendula, borage, nasturtium...

**TO PRUNE** back winter deciduous shrubs and trees — ginkgo, vitex, lemon verbenas...

**TO WEED** around and give space to any struggling herbs.

**TO AMEND** the soil throughout the garden.

**TO BREW** fresh tea with your backyard herbs — mints, dandelion, thyme, sage...

**TO APPRECIATE** and use our native herbs — black sage, white sage, sagebrush, yerba santa...

**TO BAKE** a fresh loaf of rosemary-flavored bread.

## IRIS

San Diego-Imperial County Iris Society

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO KEEP** old brown fans off the tall bearded. Good ground cleaning and spraying is helpful in pest control.

**TO MAKE** last plantings of bulbous irises for spring bloom.

**TO WATCH** watering, if rains are light. Rhizomes should not be allowed to dry out.

**TO START** a regular spraying program with copper oil to help control rust.

**TO START** in February to feed all irises with 0-10-10 liquid fertilizer. Follow directions carefully and do not over fertilize.

## NATIVES

Jeanine De Hart

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO ENJOY** your natives as the early ones begin to bloom. The ceanothus should put on a wondrous display with all the rain they received last year. Ceanothus buds begin to form almost immediately after they bloom, for the next years bloom.

**TO BE** diligent about removing weeds as they will also be found in greater abundance, if that is possible. If you choose to use Roundup, make sure that the day is calm and you stay away from plants that you want to keep.

**TO AUGMENT** rainfall with deep, infrequent waterings for all the California native plants. The natives may not be showing much top growth, but their roots are developing through the winter and early spring.

**TO FEED** natives a very light fertilizer or slow release at about 1/2 the recommended dosage. If you have a few more natives to plant, this is about the end of the time to get them into the ground. As the days get longer and the weather gets warmer, you will want to taper off on their watering. Drought-tolerant native plants need to have their summer rest!

**TO SOW** seed for California poppies if you didn't sow them in the fall. You can also plant seed of many of the summer annuals. It isn't too late to try your luck at cuttings of some of the easy to grow natives. Any of the *Salvias* that you have, or someone you



know has, can be grown easily from cuttings with no rooting hormone. *Encelia* is easy from cuttings or seed. Unless you have rooting hormone, bottom heat or a lot of experience stay away from *Dendromecon*, *Fremontodendron*, *Arctostaphylos* and *Trichostema*. You will just be frustrated. These plants are hard, even for the professionals, to grow.

**TO WRITE** to me at [annashummingbird@netscape.net](mailto:annashummingbird@netscape.net) — if you have a specific question and have an E-mail address. Sorry if you don't have access to E-mail as I do not do phone calls.

## ORCHIDS

Charles Fouquette

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO CHECK** the moisture in pots of outdoor growing orchids including cymbidiums under cover. Protect them from cold rains and possible hail damage.

**TO CONTINUE** staking and grooming cymbidium flower spikes.

**TO USE** low-nitrogen fertilizer on cymbidiums. Do not feed if overcast.

**TO KEEP** noble-type dendrobiums on the dry side. Watch for swelling of nodes for flower production, then move them to where it is warmer.

**TO REMEMBER** phals should be spiking and if moving the plant, to place it in the same general direction and area so that the flowers will bloom uniformly.

**TO WATER** early in the morning so crowns will be dry by nightfall.

**TO WATCH** closely for slugs and snails. These pests are coming out of hibernation and proliferating after the rains. Granules of 7.5% metaldehyde are an excellent bait and do not attract children or pets and do not leave a mess.

**TO BE AWARE** in outlying areas of any sudden temperature drops.

## ROSES

Marianne Truby

### NOW IS THE TIME

**TO MAINTAIN** a complete calendar of procedures you follow in preparing/maintaining/feeding your roses. The work you do now is the basis of your success or failure in the rose garden.

**TO STRIP** any foliage remaining on your bushes and rake and clean up the beds. If you have given your bushes dormant spray in late December, you will be wise to repeat it, weather permitting. This will do a lot to prevent overwintering spores of mildew and fungus.

**TO PLANT** new bushes in holes you prepared

earlier. If planting a new rose as a replacement, you will be well advised to supplement the planting mix with soil taken from another area of the garden, along with superphosphate at the bottom of the hole. If the weather is hot and dry, mound soil or mulch up around the canes and keep damp with frequent sprinkling.

**TO PRUNE** established hybrid teas, mid-January through Valentine Day. Attend the demonstrations of your local garden clubs held in municipal rose gardens to observe pruning practices and share information with participating members.

**TO FEED** new plants with liquid fertilizer when bushes have a full set of leaves. These new bushes may be the first to bloom and after verifying you have the correct plant, break off the bloom leaving the new growth intact.

**TO APPLY** rose food to established bushes in early February. A cup of alfalfa meal or pellets worked into the drip basin will help get your bushes off to a good start. Frequent small feedings will produce continuous blooms and beautiful roses throughout the year.

**TO MAINTAIN** moisture level at all times by filling your water basins at least twice a week.

**TO WATCH** for the first signs of aphids on the new growth and knock them off with a strong stream of water from the hose. They are lazy and will take a few days to climb back up.

**TO CONTROL** mildew by washing off foliage in the early morning or spray weekly with a fungicide.

**TO FINGER PRUNE** when multiple buds break on the canes, leaving only the strongest to promote strong growth.

**TO MAINTAIN** a clear area around your bushes to discourage rust fungus, which will show up on the undersides of the leaves when present. Keep infected leaves picked off and dispose of in closed containers.

## VEGETABLES

Vincent Lazaneo, Hort. Advisor UC Coop Extension  
NOW IS THE TIME

**TO CONTINUE** planting cool-season vegetables that are not likely to be damaged by frost. Cool-season vegetables include broccoli, brussels sprouts, beets, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, endive, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, peas, potatoes (white), radish, rutabaga and turnip.

**TO USE** floating row cover fabric on seeded and transplanted crops to accelerate their growth.

**TO PLANT** dormant crowns of artichoke, asparagus and rhubarb.

**TO PLANT** seeds of medium-day-length onions such  
(continued on page 20)

# COMMUNICATIONS . . .

## WE WELCOME LETTERS PERTAINING TO GARDENS!

We request comments from readers who feel that we have provided incorrect information. The goal is to give readers the best gardening knowledge available.

### ERRATUM

It has been drawn to our attention that in November-December issues of the magazine in "Now Is the Time" for African Violets, the incorrect information as to desirable pot size was given. Somehow we slipped into writing that the pot should be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times the diameter of the leaf span. Two books say it should be  $\frac{1}{2}$  across the foliage of a single-crowned plant. A Sunset book of 1977 says a pot should be just large enough to accommodate the root system; at nine months, use a 3-inch pot; when plant is 9 inches across, use 4-inch pot, and when 12 inches across, use a 5-inch pot. *The New Royal Horticultural Society Dictionary of Gardening* indicates that a  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pot should be used for a mature 8 to 10-inch plant.

"Now Is the Time" continued from previous page  
(*"Vegetables"* continued)

as 'White Sweet Spanish,' 'Stockton Yellow Globe' and 'Italian Red' (short storage life) during February for bulbs in late summer.

**TO ORDER** seeds of warm season vegetables for planting in the spring.

### VEGETABLES, ANNUALS

from UC Cooperative Extension Publications  
**NOW IS ONE OF THE BETTER TIMES IN FROST-FREE AREAS**

**TO PUT IN TRANSPLANTS OF:** broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and lettuce — Chinese forget-me-not (*Cynoglossum amabile*) cineraria, fairy primrose (*Primula malacoides*), garden stock (*Matthiola incana*), pansy, pink sand verbena, pot marigold (*Calendula*), snapdragon, and viola.

**TO PUT IN SEEDS OF:** beet, carrot, chard, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, onion (green and dry), parsnip, spinach, and turnip — baby blue eyes, candytuft, China asters, Chinese forget-me-not, coleus, delphinium, dianthus, forget-me-not, hollyhock, impatiens, lobelia, petunia, poppies, scabiosa, sweet alyssum, and Virginia stock (*Malcolmia maritima*).

### PALM NAME

In Suzanne R. Heap's article "An Urban Forest Adventure . . .," the plant *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana* is mentioned. From Australia, this tree has several common names: piccabeen palm, piccabeen bangalow palm, bangalow palm, piccabean palm, and piccabben palm, which is the spelling favored by the Wholesale Nursery Growers.

### CLASSES

Taught by Betty Newton

#### NATIVE PLANTS FREE

Thursday, January 14, 9:00AM-Noon  
Foothills Adult Education Center, Room 12  
1550 Melody Lane, El Cajon

#### FLOWER GARDENS: YEAR-ROUND COLOR

Tuesday nights, 6:20-9:30PM  
Begins January 26, 12 Weeks, \$29.00  
Grossmont High School, Room 51  
1100 Murray Drive, La Mesa

#### CUTTING YOUR WATER BILL

Grossmont High School, Room 51  
Begins May 4, 6 weeks

#### LANDSCAPING: TREES, SHRUBS, AND FLOWERS - SPRING

Thursday Mornings, 8:50AM-Noon  
Begins January 28, \$29.00  
17 weeks (Spring break March 29-April 9)  
Foothills Adult Education Center, Room 12  
1550 Melody Lane, El Cajon  
**QUESTIONS:** call 644-8218 or 401-4122

Taught by Tom del Hotal

#### PRINCIPLES OF PRUNING FRUIT TREES AND VINES - FREE

Saturdays, 1:00-4:00PM  
January 16, 23, 30 February 6, 20, 27  
Southwestern College, Room 1801  
**QUESTIONS:** call 421-6700, extension 5371  
Bill Homyak or Meredith Sinclair

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## IT'S DECIDUOUS PLANT PRUNING TIME

THE EXPERTS ALWAYS ADVISE that deciduous plants be pruned in the winter when the branches are bare. But, it is difficult to identify the short winter we usually have in San Diego. The natives often joke "winter is between Christmas and New Year's." By early January buds are beginning to appear on many varieties, especially the plums, peaches, and apricots. To make a tree fruit well, it must be trimmed and thinned and old sections with poor new growth removed.

Thinning is done to open the tree so that the sun can enter and encourage the fruit to size up and develop more flavor. Also, it is done to balance the tree so that branches will not break or split off.

Several things to remember are: Be sure to undercut when removing a large limb. To do this, cut the limb on the bottom about half way through about a foot out from where you want the branch removed. Then cut the rest off from the top. When you remove the remainder of the limb it will be easy to cut smoothly and not rip-off and damage the rest of the tree. Rake up the branches and immediately use a dormant spray (oil or oil with copper) that should only be used on bare branches. Finally put manure or a balanced fruit tree fertilizer around the trunk and water in well.

There are many good guides with excellent sketches explaining in detail how to prune different varieties. Just remember that when you cut on a slant, be sure the cut side is up. Even if you do not seal it with a pruning spray, the wood will harden off in the sun. But if the cut is on the bottom it may stay moist and diseases can form on the unprotected surface and easily enter the wood.

STAFF

## FACING REALITY

BY MARIANNE D. TRUBY

IF YOU HAVE RECENTLY arrived in the San Diego area you will revel in the hillsides covered with blooming natives, and if you arrive from an area surviving winter weather and dreaming of spring bloom, you may find the reality of the bare-root season here in San Diego a rude awakening. The months of January and February are when the nurseries receive bins of bare-root plants, trees, and related materials to assist you in building the Garden of Eden you visualize.

The literature and brochures with beautiful pictures of "the latest and newest introductions" are mesmerizing and the trips home from the nursery may result in a morning-after trauma when you realize just what you have committed yourself to do. I hope this will be a one-time-only experience for you and you will prepare for future bare-root seasons by studying local private and public gardens to learn from actual plantings how well different varieties do in your area.

Frequently, I am confronted by the rosarian recently come to the Southern California area looking for rose varieties they grew "back home" and unable to accept that a particular variety simply does not do well in this locale. I suspect they assume that the problem is mine and not the rose. Other gardeners, coming from the area where peonies are spectacular must learn the hard way (by ordering from an eastern source) that while we have many beautiful things growing here they have never seen, we actually cannot grow some plants that require the changing seasons as they had at home. Those who learn to accept this limitation also struggle hard to avoid the temptation to purchase each new variety of rose, orchid, etc. brought to the market each year, though frequently it may vary little from those we have. I am often told by rosarians that they removed a rose to make room for the latest "new" variety only to find it did not compare to the one they removed.

Although much is written about selecting materials for your garden, in the end your personal likes and dislikes are the determining factors. Makes me think of the children's story - *The Emperor's New Clothes*! □

*Marianne D. Truby has lived and gardened at her home in Chula Vista since 1955.*



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# COMMONSENSE GARDENING

BY MORT BRIGADIER

## ANTS AND TERMITES

The most disconcertingly pestiferous creature in the world may well be the **Argentine ant**. The Argentine ant is a notorious house invader. It has been known to enter a house, establish a pathway, and exit the house on the other side. Known as "Sweet Ants" in many parts of the world, they are considered beneficial. They are likely to kill and eat any insect they find in and around the house. They also aerate the soil and recycle dead animal and dead vegetable material.

When thousands of dead Argentine ants began to accumulate on my outdoor patio, I asked the County Entomologist for help. The conclusion:

1. Natural die-off of a colony.
2. Dead ants being tossed out of the nest.

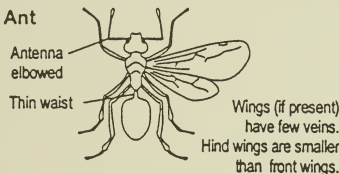
But, why on my patio? I have been sweeping away thousands of dead ants for the past three months. They are not within throwing distance of any nest that I can find. More

questions: Are there senior citizen ants? Do ants bury their dead? Or, do they just deposit them on my patio! I am

sure that my patio has become a burial ground for ants. If elephants can establish an elephant walk, why shouldn't the Argentine ant?

When is a termite not a termite? Don't rely on a termite inspector to tell you. Learn how to distinguish a termite from an ant. The "frass" you discover may not be frass at all but blown-in small grains of soil. Do not mistake an ant for a termite just because it has wings. What did the termite say when he walked into the bar? Is the bartender here?

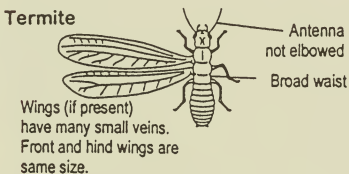
I don't know much about dead ants, but I do know how to bait the live ones. Here is how to make a **boric acid ant trap**. Punch some holes in a small screw top jar, so ants can get in and out. Make a solution of 3 tablespoons of sugar, a quarter teaspoon of borax, and eight ounces (one cup) of water. Soak a few cotton balls in the solution and put them in the jar. Lay the jar on its side to facilitate entry of the ants. To child-proof the jar screw the lid on very tight and tape the lid to the jar. **Borax is toxic.**



The ants will enter the trap, nibble a bit, and pass the bait on to the rest of the colony. The key is not to kill the ants with too much borax before they can exit the jar and carry the bait back to the nest. If there are dead ants inside the trap, reduce the amount of borax. If new ants keep arriving, increase the amount of borax.

If you spot a funeral procession of ants heading toward my patio, don't step on them. They may be friends of mine.

If you suspect that you may have found a harmful insect, please do a "Dr. Kevorkian" before bringing it for identification. Letting live insects escape is a no-no. Collect more than one insect for identification if at all possible, but please, do not collect too many. They may turn out to be beneficial insects. Place them in an appropriate sized plastic container (pill bottle or film canister). If the insects are still alive put the container in the freezer until ready for delivery. For a faster kill,



forget the freezer and add a little rubbing alcohol.

**Plant** specimen with attached insects should be collected at

the latest possible time and not allowed to dry out in a closed automobile. If you suspect that there may be insects on leaves or stems, put the specimen in a dry Ziplock bag to prevent inadvertent release and subsequent embarrassment to all concerned.

## RECYCLING WATER

There has been a lot of talk recently about future needs to recycle sewage-water to drinking water. This has led to people asking about gray water on plants. If it ever comes to pass, recycled sewage water will go through a detailed and lengthy cleansing process. Gray water (bath water, dish water, laundry water, etc.) is not processed, and may have adverse effects, or even dangerous effects on babies, pets, and plants.

Although household wash water may be better than no water at all during drought, it may contain high levels of boron from laundry products, chlorine from common bleaches, sodium from water softeners, food residues, other organic matter, and only heaven knows what else. Gray water may attract insects, cats, ants, and rodents.

The only really safe use of gray water is to flush toilets, provided that you pour it directly into the bowl and not into the tank. University of California leaflet 2918, available by calling the Master Gardener at 694-2860, discusses the hazards of using household water on plants. My advice: don't do it! You may wind up praying that your only problem was the Argentine ant.

#### QUALITY SEED

Commercial growers spend many thousands of dollars for their seeds. They demand and get the highest quality seed with close to 90% germination, zero weeds, and seeds that produce the best crop year after year. The seeds that we buy seldom come to us directly from the seed grower. The seeds that we plant with high expectations, and often disappointment, may be from the sweepings off the seed room floor, packaged for resale by seed brokers.

Economize on anything else, but never look for a bargain when buying seeds. Too often the packaging is worth more than the seeds. Do some research on the source of your seeds.

#### CHECK THE SOURCE

I can never trust a photocopy that fails to indicate when and where it came from. I am always uneasy about accepting advice from experts who don't tell you their sources, or if the data is from personal experience, or from something they read about, or from something they heard about but haven't had time to replicate. Most of what we need to know about gardening is little more than using "less pesticide and more common sense."

A friend of mine was recently asked to research the available information on organic gardening. He was allowed three days to assemble the information. To lend credence to his search, he waited the three full days before submitting his report. The final report consisted of just three words: All you need to know about organic gardening; just do it. □

*Mort Brigadier majored in horticulture at Cuyamaca College and has an MBA in management. He is a UCCE Master Gardener.*

*Illustration from "Pest Notes, Publication 7415" University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources*

#### References:

- UCCE Leaflet, 2968, *Using Household Waste Water on Plants*.
- Olkowski, et al., *Common-Sense Pest Control*, The Taunton Press, 1991.
- Hartman and Kester, *Plant Propagation*, Prentice-Hall, 4th Ed, 1981.
- UC, *Pest Note Nr 12, Household Ants*.

## THE DORIS WOOD COTTAGE GARDEN AND NURSERY

The Doris Wood Cottage Garden & Nursery is a one acre, "English-style" perennial garden. Paths wind through rose covered arbors and rose bordered walks. An original "canvas" of flowering plants and shrubs greets the eye at every turn. Pale yellow Scabiosa, bicolor Salvia and a rare, pink Chaste Tree are among the thousands of plants in the garden.

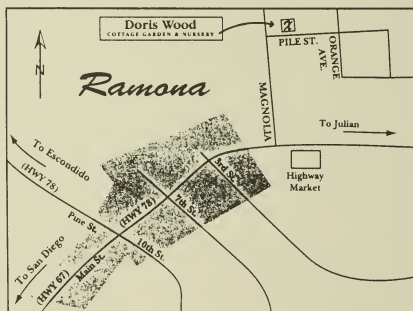
A small nursery adjacent to the garden specializes in English Roses, antique roses and select perennials/shrubs.

#### Hours

9:00 am - till sundown Sat & Sun, or by appointment. Open Friday through Monday during the month of July.

#### Admission

Admission is free. A donation box is located in the garden; proceeds help maintain the garden.



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# SONGBIRDS IN THE GARDEN

BY DORCAS UTTER

SONGBIRDS IN THE GARDEN complement the natural beauty of the landscape. There is a definite relationship between our garden plants and the songbirds that visit areas of human habitation. If you are a novice birdwatcher, find out what species of birds are in the general vicinity of your property. Go to your favorite bookstore and get a field guide that pertains to the birds of California or the West. Local organizations, such as the San Diego Audubon Society and the San Diego Natural History Museum, have bird walks that are open to public participation. If you do not have a pair of binoculars, now is the time to make that purchase. Check out the many types available in your price range. Binoculars are a modest investment for the benefits received with clear vision of details at a greater distance.

### FOOD PREFERENCES

Attracting birds to feed and nest on your property will increase your pleasure in birdwatching, while providing more birds to feed on "bugs" in your garden. The songbirds that migrate through the San Diego area or nest here, as well as the resident birds, have their favorite foods among the native vegetation. However, many exotic plants that have been introduced into our Mediterranean-climate gardens have been accepted by these birds. An ideal garden habitat for birds should include food, water, shelter areas, and nesting sites.

Take a good look at the beaks of the birds in your area (use your binoculars). The shape of the beak will reveal their food preferences. The thick, sturdy beak reveals a seed eater, such as a house finch. The short, nearly triangular beak with a wide gape, depicts an insect eater, such as the black phoebe that catches insects in flight. A thin pointed beak, such as that of wrens and warblers, is also effective at collecting insects. The hooked beak of flesh-eating birds, such as hawks and owls, is designed for a predatory type of survival.

White-crowned Sparrow



### SUITABLE HABITAT

Several species of songbirds, such as: house finches, white-crowned sparrows, American robins, barn swallows, lesser goldfinches, black phoebes, mourning doves, scrub jays, and northern mockingbirds, have adapted well to our local areas of human habitation

where the area provides a suitable bird habitat. Many birds, such as western meadowlarks and western bluebirds prefer open grasslands; while some, such as northern flickers and various nuthatches, prefer forested areas. The amount of land and the type of habitat you have plus the proximity to a natural area, such as a canyon with native vegetation, an open land, or a wooded area, will affect the species of birds that you will attract to your garden. You can enjoy the benefits of greater diversity in an area where two ecosystems meet. But, do not despair if your home territory consists of a small city lot. Just remember the essentials of **food, water, and shelter** and you will discover that the metropolitan fliers will spot your habitat. After all, they do have a bird's-eye view.

A combination of trees, shrubs and vines will provide a diversified bird diet. Also, many birds will feed heavily on insects in your yard, especially during the nesting season. So, be aware that the use of pesticides can be very hazardous to all wildlife, including the birds.

American Robin



### WATER AND SHELTER

Your garden vegetation may likely provide the necessary shelter and nesting sites. You will need to be responsible still for the availability of ample fresh water for drinking and bathing. A suitable water area should have shallow sloping sides with a rough textured surface, and a maximum depth of one to two inches. And, if you can provide slowly dripping water (preferably in a recycled system) it will be more attractive to birds. You also may provide an area, such as a plant saucer, containing some sand, tiny pebbles, or chicken grit, as birds use these materials for food grinders in their gizzards.

Reasonably dense trees or shrubs offer shelter and good roosting and nest building sites. Most birds will establish territories around their nesting sites, which they will protect with great tenacity during the nesting season. Some birds, such as house wrens, ash-throated flycatchers, and western bluebirds will use nesting boxes. If you decide to use these, check with a supply house for the proper type.



## BIRD FEEDERS

If your garden is one of very limited space, you may feel the need of bird feeders as a source of supplemental food to that provided by the vegetation growing in your area. Plan to put seed feeders in an area where there will be limited problems from sprouting seeds. Place any feeders or bird baths in strategically located places for your observing pleasure. It is unwise to place a feeder with bird seed in an area where you plan to let your favorite annuals or perennials mature so you can harvest seed for future planting. The birds that you attract may harvest your choice seed for you. When you observe a small plant swaying with the weight of a tiny lesser goldfinch feeding on it, you will understand that the birds prefer the natural experience of interacting with nature. It is also very important to have feeders and water supplies in areas that provide the birds with ample viewing and an escape route from predators. You cannot protect them one hundred percent of the time, there will be casualties; but don't set them up. Feeders mounted on metal posts or hanging from wires or the use of metal baffles are all protective devices. If you can provide for an ample natural food supply, you should have limited, if any, need for supplemental feeding. This is pretty much a personal choice.

If your garden has an open area suitable to ground feeding, you may wish to try a bird seed mix, chicken scratch feed, and/or sunflower seed. Bird seed on the ground will attract seed eaters such as mourning doves, California towhees, California quail, scrub jays, and California thrashers.

Scrub Jay



## PLANT SELECTION

Don't be discouraged if you do not see immediate results from your efforts to attract more species of songbirds to your garden. The long term success will no doubt pertain to the trial and error of plant selection to your particular area. You should be aware that you and the birds may not always agree on plant selection. The northern mockingbird may prefer your cultivated fruit over the native elderberry that you so graciously provided. Or the house finch may feast on the seeds of your recently planted annuals. It may be advisable to arrange for netting over your "larder" and provide supplemental fruits available for sharing with your feathered visitors. In the long term, their benefits will far outweigh any problems. A bird can devour many

times its own weight in arthropods. During the nesting season, many birds that are basically seed eaters will feed insects, etc., to their young.

Various sparrows, warblers, goldfinches, and flycatchers are attracted to flower beds by the insects in the area. And, if the flowers are not deadheaded, the sparrows, finches, and lesser goldfinches may feed on the seeds.

The following list suggests plant species suitable for attracting songbirds in the San Diego area: *Sambucus mexicana* (elderberry), *Vitis californica* (grape), *Schinus molle* (California pepper tree), *Malosma laurina* (laurel sumac), *Prunus lyonii* (Catalina cherry), *Solanum* spp. (nightshade), and various species of *Ilex* (holly), *Pyracantha* (firethorne), *Viburnum* (laurustinus), *Cotoneaster* (cotoneaster), and *Elaeagnus* (silverberry).

Your yard, be it large or small, is part of the home range of a variety of creatures, and the sky above it is available to any avian species that chooses to enter your air space. (This article excluded information on hummingbirds and raptors.) Incorporate into your landscape plants that are suitable to your particular ecosystem and also have the potential to attract your favorite songbirds. Broadleaf evergreen trees or shrubs offer good shelter and conifers make good nesting sites.

Goldfinch



But don't get carried away by overplanting so that your mature plants create a jumble of vegetation that restricts needed open space for the birds. This also can eliminate viewing vistas for the human inhabitants. Even a modest, but suitable, songbird habitat area (**food, water, shelter**), will encourage additional species to visit your garden and in turn will add to your viewing pleasure. A favorite chair by the kitchen window, or a secluded bench in the garden provides a spot for a brief respite while observing the antics and activities of these feathered friends.

*Sizes of birds in illustrations cannot be compared.*

*DORCAS UTTER is an instructional aide in horticulture at Cuyamaca College. She is a past president and past education chairman at San Diego Audubon Society. Using sign language she leads walks for the hearing-impaired.*

*Reprinted from January-February 1995 California Garden.*

# GARDEN IS RUGGED, RELAXING, AND RAIDED BY RABBITS!

BY MAUREEN AUSTIN

SHE CALLS IT a "rugged garden," but it reflects a soft and creative touch. Elma Terry's wildlife habitat garden in Alpine, California is comprised of over 90 percent herbs, with the balance being other plants, which feed hummingbirds, butterflies, and songbirds.

Well, it actually feeds *additional* wildlife, as well, but not by her choice! Elma's garden "challenges" are gophers and rabbits—garden-crashers who come without having been invited!

Bordering on a vast open space offers panoramic beauty to a garden setting such as Elma's, but also provides habitat for hordes of those critters that can devour a new plant overnight. Many gardeners would throw in the towel and give up, but she continues to plant and try to outsmart those marauders. Gophers are trapped, and rabbits face chicken wire cages and robotic owls.

Is it worth it? She would say yes. So would anyone who visits her garden, now in its sixth year (at the oldest part.) But as in any garden, "It is still growing and changing," she said.

One element that is certain to remain constant in the midst of garden change is the relaxing atmosphere so prevalent in Elma's garden. Sitting alongside the pond, which is fed by a recirculating waterfall and includes a fountain spray in its center, is certain to relax even the most stressed visitor.

She considers her garden a sort of "ministry," and has hosted retreats for her church and other spiritual events on the grounds. Her son was recently married in a gazebo alongside the waterfall.

Elma is another one of Alpine's "salvia-holics," and grows fourteen varieties of sage (*Salvia*) in her garden. She said Cleveland sage is her favorite because of both its magnificent beauty and its intense fragrance. Another favorite is the butterfly bush, which she grows not only in lavender, but in dark purple and yellow as well.

## RABBIT-RESISTANT HABITAT PLANTS

Although no plant is truly rabbit-proof, the following are some of the known "lesser favorites" of the "wily wabbit," yet favorites of butterflies, hummingbirds and/or songbirds.

*Achillea* (yarrow, particularly the yellow-flowered varieties), *Aquilegia* (columbine), *Artemisia* (wormwood), cactus, *Digitalis* (foxglove), *Gaillardia*

(blanket flower), geraniums, *Kniphofia uvaria* (red-hot poker), *Lavandula* (lavender), *Origanum* (oregano), *Penstemon*, *Perovskia* (Russian sage), *Rosmarinus* (rosemary), *Santolina*, *Salvia* (sage), *Tagetes* (marigold), *Tanacetum vulgare* (tansy), *Thymus* (thyme), and *Yucca*. □

*Reprinted from the 1998 Sage & Songbirds Festival Program. This festival is a project of CHIRP (Center to Help Instill Respect and Preservation) of Alpine. Maureen Austin is executive director of CHIRP for Garden Wildlife, and project coordinator for "Sage & Songbirds."*



## ABOUT GIANT WHITEFLIES

BY MARIANNE D. TRUBY

IN THE BEGINNING, the feeling was that the giant whiteflies were concentrating on our hibiscus bushes and many gardeners cut them way back to control the ugly things. For a time it seemed helpful and the hibiscus bushes responded by producing beautiful new foliage and bright glorious flowers. Then, after we had been advised to wash them off with a strong stream of water, we discovered they had relocated to many types of plants—whatever was available.

This year the word has been that a better solution (and one that has worked for me) is that the use of Volck oil will actually be quite effective but must be repeated at regular intervals. It can be used on most plants with little or no harmful effects and also removes the sooty mold fungus through the control of whitefly larvae. My plumeria and canna plants have revived now and I have not found giant whiteflies elsewhere. Volck Oil is a long-time product and information on the label is clear.



## Book Reviews

### THE BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN GARDENER'S DESK REFERENCE

Janet Marinelli, General Editor

New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1998, 800 pages, many b&w illustrations, 7½" x 9½", hardcover, \$40

The scope of information included in this book is amazing. It is divided into twenty sections and excellent, concise information is given on every possible phase of gardening from botany to trivia. The information was obtained by expert gardeners throughout the world. There are many graphs, tables, plant lists organized by region and plant usage, and conversion tables for using and applying chemicals and plant additives. I found the section on container gardening very informative. The best materials to use in the bottom of a container plus the different kinds of containers and soils were explained, and there were lists of vegetables and other plants that do well in containers. There is a good glossary and index, and in the trivia section one can find the names and addresses of botanical gardens and miscellaneous information such as flower of the month. This book should be included in every gardener's library.

*Reviewed by Barbara S. Jones*

### THE WELL-TENDED PERENNIAL GARDEN

Tracy DiSabato-Aust

Portland, Timber Press, 1998, 338 pages, 131 color photos, 7¾" x 10¾", hardcover, \$29.95

What a delight to have the opportunity to review this title that truly does discuss and explain the delights and problems of the much discussed and recommended "Perennial Garden." Much has been published recently about the value of these long lasting plants to create a showplace garden accompanied by photos taken while they are at their prime with little or no attention given to the requirements for establishing and maintaining such a garden.

The author has practical experience in maintaining gardens professionally and at her home in the U.S. All the topics have been included here: planing and preparing your site, pests and diseases, pruning, deadheading, disbudding, thinning, seasonal requirements, as well as an A-Z encyclopedia of perennials covering common names, family, exposure required and flowering months. Appendix A covers ornamental grasses, Appendix B presents a planting and maintenance schedule, and

Appendix C has thirty-six different lists of perennials for specific pruning and maintenance requirements, including those requiring staking, those that may need division every 1-3, 4-5, or 10 years, and those needing deadheading or those that do not bloom with deadheading. There is also a Glossary and Index. You will never regret owning this title!

*Reviewed by Marianne Truby*

### THE INVITING GARDEN: Gardening for the Senses, Mind, and Spirit

Allen Lacy

New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1998, 218 pages, 83 color photos, 7¾" x 9½", \$40

Personal gardens, the work of one's hands, mind, and spirit, are the subjects of these essays. Lacy, a professor of philosophy and former garden columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*, focuses on gardens as private spaces. He seeks to provide a retreat from the world for the gardener, his or her family and friends. A color photo of children climbing over and around a huge tree trunk and roots is a splendid example of a garden that draws one into it.

Although there are some suggestions regarding specific design elements and plant material, the overall intent is to encourage awareness of how sight, sound, taste, smell, and texture are stimulated and soothed in the garden. Lacy also celebrates the mental and emotional effects of nurturing plants, experiencing their life cycles and considering the sometimes unproductive interaction of cats, dogs, or rabbits. The garden as a teacher is exemplified in the degree of attention that gardening requires and the information that proceeds from investigating the history and requirements of plant species.

Color photos of the author's garden in southern New Jersey and the photographer, Cynthia Woodward's Portland, Oregon garden demonstrate the book's thesis. Also pictured are public and private gardens throughout the Western world, often with children playing in them. In fact, the whole book articulates the joys and satisfactions, the play, that so many of us find as we work in the garden.

*Reviewed by Marge Howard-Jones*

### 1,112 DOWN TO EARTH GARDEN SECRETS

Julie Landry and Jeff Novak, Editors

Greendale, WI, Country Books, 1998, 175 pages, line drawings throughout, 5¼" x 8¼", hardcover, \$21.99

This collection of tips and suggestions is from "everyday" gardeners from all parts of the country. These home-gardeners have passed along what they have learned from family, friends, and mentors. This sharing of simple solutions and personal successes is enjoyable reading.

Sixteen chapters with clever titles range from planting to composting and just about everything between. Grandparents share their helpful hints to get children excited and involved in the garden. There are remedies to rid plants of all sorts of bugs and pests, information on companion planting of herbs and vegetables, as well as lists of plants to attract birds and butterflies. It's all here. However, I offer a caution with respect to some "recipes." Go easy and use good judgement as some



remedies do not even specify amounts. I found the book delightful and useful with loads of common sense tips using things on hand around our homes. A handy little book.

*Reviewed by Suzie Parker*

## PRUNING MADE EASY

**M. Lombardi & C. Serra Zanetti**

New York, Distributed by Sterling Publishing Co. Inc., 1998. 160 pages, color throughout, 7 1/4" x 10 1/4", softcover, \$14.95

Originally published by Ward-Lock, this book provides expert guidance on how and when to prune all major types of plants, from adult trees and small shrubs to roses, clematis, and fruit. It also covers correcting defects such as diseased or damaged branches. To help you do the job right, the author explains how plants grow, bear fruit and flowers, become active and lie dormant. Differences between pruning those that flower on current year's growth from those that flower on previous year's growth are explained and illustrated. There are over 300 color photographs and drawings demonstrating different pruning techniques. The author also explains the tools and equipment needed for pruning and how to keep your tools in good condition. This is a good book for quick reference in pruning.

*Reviewed by John Rojas, Jr.*

## SEEDS AND PROPAGATION

**Susan McClure**

New York, Workman Publishing Co., 1998, 160 pages, 2-color illustrations throughout, 5 1/4" x 9", softcover, \$10.95

This is the second book in a series by Smith & Hawken called *The Hands-On Gardener*. All the basics for starting your plants are given with good instructions that can easily be followed by the beginner gardener. It will push one from just purchasing bedding plants at the garden center and setting them in the ground and encourage one to try propagation with all the rewards it brings. The author covers equipment, seeds, stem cuttings, root cuttings, division, and layering. There are line drawings as well as lots of how-to's. Highlighted boxes separated from the text give useful information, advice, tips, and practical helps.

This handbook covers propagation well, offering enough technical information for the experienced gardener to use as a reference that is basic and clear enough for the novice.

*Reviewed by Suzie Parker*

## GARDENS OF THE WINE COUNTRY

**Molly Chappellet with Richard Tracy**

San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1998, 204 pages, approx. 325 color photos, 9 3/4" x 11 3/4", hardcover, \$40

Long shadows on lush lawns lead the eye to vast vineyards, ancient oaks shade huge swaths of tulips, clipped parterres enclose precisely rounded shrubs—the gardens in this elegant coffee-table volume are truly "over the top." No need to travel to Europe or Japan, it's all right here in the Golden State where the business of producing wine seems to include the planting of incredible gardens. While the scale might seem too grandiose to apply to the average back yard, it is a pure treat just to glimpse these visions of what can be achieved by seemingly unlimited

resources of time, energy and cash.

Descriptions of each garden are very personal, giving insights into the personalities of those whose passions have created them. All are obviously romantics, but also attuned to the dictates of horticultural wisdom. One owner exults in her garden's ability to sprout any cutting she sticks in the ground; another has laboriously brought in top soil for twelve garden terraces (including the roof of his winery) on his rocky hilltop site. One garden is devoted to native plants growing in a free-form mode; another is a series of spheres in two and three dimensions, carefully laid out and maintained.

Some sites are historic, with echoes from rancho and Victorian eras, many are older establishments that have been completely done over and several are very modern. In every case, generous visual and verbal interpretations have been provided; close-up and panoramic views are accompanied by leisurely discussion of how the gardens were designed and their owners' experience of them. Although almost all of the gardens overlook a vineyard or other pastoral scene, there is a real divergence of thought among their owners as to whether the view is to be the main function of their setting, or an occasional backdrop framed by the garden, but not dominating it.

*Reviewed by Marge Howard-Jones*

## HERBS IN BLOOM

**Jo Ann Gardner**

Portland, Timber Press, 1998, 394 pages, 115 color photos, 7 line drawings, 6 1/4" x 9 1/4", hardcover, \$34.95

"Handsome is as handsome does" is turned around in this appreciation of the beauty of plants traditionally grown for their utility. The author, who gardens in New Brunswick, Canada, presents vivid images of blooms that are familiar, yet more intensely colored than those of species otherwise familiar to Southern Californians.

The effect of climate on growing and harvesting these plants also must be taken into account in the first chapter on their cultivation, which relates not at all to this part of the world. However, the following chapter on using them in the landscape is well organized and illustrated with attractive line drawings.

The bulk of the book is a rich compendium of eighty flowering herbs, with complete descriptions of the site and soil conditions required, landscape uses, and bloom seasons. Each entry also includes the plant's history and uses, descriptions of related species, recipes (such as candied flowers and pickled chives), and other information about the herb at hand.

Excellent color photos of blooms embellish the herbs' descriptions. Each is introduced by a quotation from gardeners, past and present; comments by Gertrude Jekyll and John Muir, quotations from Shakespeare and Beatrix Potter add reminders of the enduring role of herbs in human history.

The first of several appendices offers a cross-reference of common names, followed by a listing of herbs in order of their blooming season. The extensive directory of herb sources is international and is organized as to seed sources, specialty seed sources, and plant sources.

*Reviewed by Marge Howard-Jones*



# SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION

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MAIL — 2125 Park Boulevard, San Diego CA 92101-4792

619/232-5762, located in Casa del Prado, Room 105, Balboa Park

*Under the sponsorship of the Park & Recreation Department, City of San Diego, California*

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1999

February 16, 1999

April 20, 1999

June 15, 1999

5:45 p.m.

Casa del Prado, Room 101  
Balboa Park, San Diego

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Times vary. Call for information.

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3rd Thu - 1:30 pm, Rancho Bernardo Library

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Pres: Norma Illingworth

479-3478

2nd Wed - 9:30 am, Rohr Park Manor,

Sweetwater Road

### BRIDGE AND BAY GARDEN CLUB

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435-4236

4th Mon - 9:30 am, Winn Room,

Coronado Public Library

### CARLSBAD GARDEN CLUB

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Heritage Hall, Magee Park

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Monthly meetings to explore local nurseries

and gardens to acclimate themselves to the area

and to new garden conditions.

Call for information.

### CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB

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3rd Thu - 1:00 pm, Norman Park

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Pres: Laura Rockwell

435-1631

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760-749-9608

2nd Tue - 12:30 pm, Valley Center Com. Hall

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460-0387

2nd Mon - 9:30 am, 4975 Memorial Drive,

La Mesa

### LA JOLLA GARDEN CLUB

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551-8672

3rd Tue - 1:30 pm, L.J. Lutheran Church

### LAKESIDE GARDEN CLUB

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443-1529

3rd Mon - 2:00 pm, Lakeside Historical

Church, 9906 Maine Avenue

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3rd Mon - 10:30 am, Home of Members

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760-945-1287

3rd Sat - 1:00 pm, MiraCosta Community

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272-9727

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222-5207

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Pres: Cindy Drake

271-8933

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4th Thu - 10:00 am, Torrey Pines Christian

Church, LJ

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1st Fri - 12:00 pm, Vista Senior Center

All area codes are 619 unless otherwise noted.

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SOGETSU SCHOOL OF IKEBANA  
Master Instructor: Sumiko Lahey 429-6198

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Nov & Dec ONLY, 3rd Wed

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Nov & Dec ONLY, 3rd Thu

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SAN DIEGO HOYA GROUP

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North County 760-758-4290

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IRIS SOCIETY

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E-mail: srocha@pacbell.net

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Jun/Aug/Nov - Joslyn Sr Ctr, 18402 West

Bernardo Drive, Rancho Bernardo

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

IRIS SOCIETY

Pres: Gerald Snyder 818-352-7018  
1st Thu - 7:30 pm -

Canoga Park Women's Club,  
7401 Jordan, Canoga Park

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SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

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3rd Tue - 7:30 pm, Casa del Prado

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Library (new), 2nd floor

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Pres: Ardell Marlin 760-753-6952  
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1st Tues - 7:30 pm, Casa del Prado

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3rd Tue - 7:00 pm, Bonita Valley Baptist Church

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SOCIETY

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Send changes to: Lynn Beyerle, Affiliates  
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